

## Message Text

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AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PRIORITY

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USSALTTWO/CTB

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PARM, SOPN

SUBJECT: MARCH 7 ROUNDUP: PRESS ITEMS OF ARMS CONTROL  
INTEREST

LONDON FOR AMB/EX

1. RICHARD BURT, IN NEW YORK TIMES NEWS ANALYSIS, SAID MANY OF PRESIDENT CARTER'S HIGH-RANKING ADVISERS, AS WELL AS SPECIALISTS ON SOVIET UNION, ARE CONVINCED THAT FAILURE TO CONCLUDE SALT AGREEMENT THIS YEAR "WOULD NOT ONLY CONSTITUTE SERIOUS SETBACK IN IMPROVED TIES BETWEEN WASHINGTON AND MOSCOW BUT WOULD ALSO LEAD TO AN ACCELERATION IN ARMS COMPETITION." BURT SAID IMPORTANCE ATTACHED TO ARMS TALKS WAS ILLUSTRATED LAST WEEK WHEN IT APPEARED THAT SENIOR POLICYMAKERS DIFFERED OVER IDEA OF DIRECTLY LINKING SOVIET BEHAVIOR IN HORN OF AFRICA WITH CONDUCT OF NEGOTIA-  
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TIONS IN GENEVA. BURT SAID SALT NEGOTIATORS HAVE ENCOUNTERED MAJOR PROBLEMS ON DETAILS OF PROPOSED AGREEMENT, INCLUDING PRECISE RESTRICTIONS THAT WOULD BE PLACED ON CRUISE MISSILES AND BACKFIRE BOMBER. ACCORDING TO BRZEZINSKI, HE NOTED, THESE PROBLEMS ARE BASICALLY TECHNICAL AND "DO NOT REPRESENT LACK OF 'POLITICAL WILL' IN EITHER WASHINGTON OR MOSCOW TO COMPLETE AN AGREEMENT.

PRIVATELY, HOWEVER, MANY OFFICIALS BELIEVE THAT IT IS ENORMOUSLY DIFFICULT FOR EITHER SIDE TO MAKE FURTHER CONCESSIONS IN TALKS NOW." BURT QUOTED SOME OFFICIALS AS SAYING IF NEW IMPETUS IS NOT GIVEN TO GENEVA TALKS, CARTER ADMINISTRATION WILL BE FORCED TO MAKE SOME PAINFUL DECISIONS. PRESSURE TO MOVE AHEAD WITH NEW STRATEGIC ARMS, SUCH AS MX MOBILE MISSILE, WILL GROW, AND CARTER'S IMAGE AS CHAMPION OF DISARMAMENT WILL SUFFER, BURT POINTED OUT.

2. PRO AND CON ARGUMENTS FOR SALT TREATY, FEATURING INTERVIEWS WITH WARNKE AND NITZE, WERE PUBLISHED IN U.S. NEWS AND WORLD REPORT (MARCH 13). WARNKE SAID WITHOUT SALT TWO TREATY THERE WOULD BE AN UNRESTRAINED NUCLEAR ARMS COMPETITION. U.S., HE SAID, COULD MATCH SOVIET MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS BUT "SOME EXPERTS HAVE ESTIMATED IT WOULD COST US SOMETHING LIKE 20 BILLION DOLLARS ADDITIONAL WITHIN NEXT FEW YEARS TO DO IT." WARNKE SAID IN SALT TWO WE WILL HAVE FOR FIRST TIME "QUALITATIVE RESTRAINTS ON DEVELOPMENT OF NEW STRATEGIC WEAPONS AND IMPROVEMENTS IN EXISTING STRATEGIC WEAPONS." NITZE SAID SALT TWO TREATY WILL NOT LEAVE US IN POSITION EVEN OF ROUGH EQUALITY WITH SOVIET UNION BY 1982, OR BY 1985." HE DECLARED "I THINK IT IS BEYOND ARGUMENT THAT SOVIET UNION WILL HAVE MUCH BIGGER AND MORE FIXED ICBM'S WITH MORE INDEPENDENTLY TARGETABLE WARHEADS THAN WE WILL BY 1985. NOTHING IN PROPOSED AGREEMENT WILL PREVENT THAT."

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3. ALTON FRYE, IN LENGTHY ARTICLE PUBLISHED IN DAILY NEWSPAPER "THE TENNESSEAN," CHARGED SYNDICATED COLUMNISTS ROWLAND EVANS AND ROBERT NOVAK WITH "CHRONIC INACCURACY." FRYE SAID COLLECTIVELY "THEIR REPEATED ERRORS ARE CLEAR AND PRESENT DANGER TO PUBLIC UNDERSTANDING." HE CITED, FOR EXAMPLE, THEIR ALLEGATION THAT EXISTING U.S. CRUISE MISSILES WOULD NOT HAVE CHANCE OF PENETRATING USSR'S SOPHISTICATED DEFENSE SYSTEM. "EVEN MOST PESSIMISTIC STUDIES DO NOT SUPPORT SUCH STATEMENT," FRYE ASSERTED. "THOROUGH INQUIRY WOULD HAVE SHOWN EVANS AND NOVAK THAT NOT EVEN 50 BILLION DOLLAR CRASH PROGRAM BY SOVIETS OVER SEVERAL YEARS COULD KEEP PACE WITH LIKELY EVOLUTION OF CRUISE MISSILE TECHNOLOGY." VANCE

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## Message Attributes

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